

How to raise boys and avoid PC nonsense

By Julian Tomlinson, Regional Editor in Chief, News Ltd., 26 May 2016

“But surely balance can be achieved by nurturing boys’ instincts while also teaching them restraint, self-control, refinement and, above all, respect.”

WE need to start rethinking how we raise boys.

As society has evolved, there is a clear trend towards teaching men and boys that even the most positive of masculine traits are bad.

Of course, this evolution has been extremely beneficial.

No longer do we have duels to the death over points of honour, or men raping and pillaging at will or at the whims of despotic kings.

But while the stereotypical male traits of violence and aggression are thankfully repressed today, the pendulum has swung even further to repress other instincts such as assertiveness, competitiveness, risk-taking, strong leadership and decisiveness.

All traits that helped the human race survive and flourish for millennia.

Of course women exhibit the same behaviours but today let’s just deal with men.

The move towards gender equality tells men to be more in touch with their feminine side, while telling women to act more like men.

Men are constantly told that sensitivity is more valuable than brawn, that meekness is better than boldness, and that revelling in and exploiting the natural advantages of being male isn’t fair.

Pursuits such as hunting, combat sports and even football draw shudders and eye rolls from some quarters more than admiration.

Boys who pretend to be heroic soldiers and use sticks as guns are suspended from schools.

There’s no more “bullrush” or “red rover” at school, even climbing and any sort of boisterous play is banned.

More social commentators are encouraging parents to see if their sons would prefer to play with dolls rather than trucks.

In other words, being a man is OK, but acting like one shouldn’t be encouraged. The ability to hunt and butcher a wild animal is becoming not only a dying art but a despised one.

Locker room banter among men – possibly the most effective character-building environment imaginable – is discouraged and boys are told to run to the teacher, government or Mum and

Dad if they feel offended rather than make a witty comeback.

Movements such as Scouts that teaches boys life skills, teamwork, basic bushcraft and social graces are waning in popularity.

Even our military places more emphasis on tolerance and not causing offence than aggression, stoicism and uncompromisingly tough leadership.

Also throw into the mix that a man's naturally higher sex drive tells him to approach women.

But there are news stories and opinion pieces every day about "creeps", "weirdos" and "stalkers" whose only crime – when it all boils down – is that they were just trying to get a date.

Giving an innocent – or even a blatantly flirtatious – compliment to a woman can land a man in hot water.

Men are inherently programmed to seek out healthy, good-looking women of child-bearing age – and this programming is so powerful that it carries on well into old age.

But a man who follows the primal imperative to place value on these things is shamed by modern media.

So boys are growing up with natural urges that they are constantly being told are undesirable.

They are confused. But while society is increasingly saying being overtly masculine is bad, women are also saying: "Where are the real men?"

This trend towards "neomascularity" forces boys – and society – to place less value on strength and bravado and take all steps not to do anything that someone might criticise.

But surely balance can be achieved by nurturing boys' instincts while also teaching them restraint, self-control, refinement and, above all, respect.

Boys in ancient Sparta underwent at least 10 years of brutal, bloody, murderous training to become the world's most feared warriors.

But acceptance into Spartan society also depended on mastering poetry, music, athletics and public speaking, and having respect for women and authority.

True warrior poets.

The historical record appears to paint them as the ideal mix of unashamed masculinity and refinement.

At the very least, they prove that healthy masculinity is distinct from boorish mindlessness, and that it can coexist with a refined society.